

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action mailed May 14, 2002. Applicant has cancelled Claim 16 and amended Claims 13 and 22 to clarify the novel aspects of the present invention. Applicant has further added new dependent claims 23-34 to provide additional novelty and claim features not disclosed in the cited references. Applicant respectfully submits that the amended and newly added claims are a proper, do not constitute new matter, and will not create an additional burden on the Examiner. The amended and new added claims are merely to make more explicit that which was implicit, inherent or intrinsic from the overall view of the claims as originally submitted. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that such amendments and newly added claims be entered.

Applicant's newly added Claims 23-29 depend from, among others, independent Claim 1 and include at least the additional feature of a compliance module to record compliance information related to the equipment.

Applicant's newly added Claim 30 depends from independent Claim 1 and includes the additional feature of a work module coupled to the inquiry module and the inventory module of the equipment information system. The work module to identify equipment needed for the construction, query the equipment information-system for the construction equipment and allocate the equipment for the construction.

Applicant's Claims 31-34 depend from, among others, independent claim 1 and include at least the additional feature of a graphical information module to graphically illustrate an

electrical distribution system. Applicant respectfully submits that newly added Claims 23-34 provide additional features that are not taught, disclosed or suggested by the references of record in the present case.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. §102

In the Office Action mailed May 14, 2002, the Examiner rejected Applicant's claims 1-13, 15, 16, and 18-21 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Harris et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,878,416). In support of Examiner's rejection, Examiner stated:

Harris et al show an automated system and method for matching available equipment to a recipient including an equipment database 32 that includes attributes of the equipment, see col. 6, lines 40-43 and col. 8, lines 1-23, a database manager 33, a database maintenance module that loads the data into the database, an inquiry module 30, an inventory module that updates the data after a match, a transportation module that controls shipping, an installation and removal module that tracks the location history of the equipment, see col. 12, line 63 to col. 13, line 2 and col. 13, lines 30-38. Periodic searching of the database is disclosed in col. 6, line 36 and col. 11, lines 34-44.

Claim 22 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by Harris et al. Harris et al receive orders for equipment from requesters 40, 42, 44 at a central inventory location at matching module 30, determination if an order is eligible for allocation is made by prioritizing the orders as disclosed in col. 5, line 66 to col. 6 line 11, determining if equipment is available is made by checking

available inventory 35, the order is allocated when the match is made and the order is filled when the equipment is transferred, see col. 13, lines 30-35.

Applicant has carefully studied the Harris et al. reference and respectfully submits that the reference does not disclose a transportation module as claimed by Applicant's claim 1. Specifically, Harris et al. disclose only that upon matching an item the "submitter 13 or the recipient may initiate the physical transfer of the item to the recipient using some or all of the allocation data 14, match data 180, inventory data 34 availability data 35, request data 152, or matching information 168, or any suitable combination of this or other information." (See Harris et al., col. 13, lines 31-38).

Applicant's Claim 1 is directed to an equipment information system having, among other elements, a transportation module operable to record the transport of equipment from central inventory location to a service center using the equipment database and through an interface. Applicant submits that a transportation module operable to record the transport of equipment, as claimed in Applicant's Claim 1, is neither taught, disclosed or even suggested by the Harris reference's disclosure of a system where users may "initiate the physical transfer" based upon matched data.

Applicant respectfully submits that the §102 rejection of Claim 1 is improper since Harris et al. discloses initiating the physical transfer of equipment, which fails to disclose a transportation module operable to record the transport of equipment, as provided in Claim 1. Applicant's Claim 2-12

depend from Claim 1, and in some instances from intervening Claims, and provide additional features, which combined with Claim 1 are not shown in Harris et al. or other cited references. For this reason, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of Claims 1-12 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) and pass Claims 1-12 to issue.

Applicant has amended independent Claim 13 to include the additional step of "storing shipment attributes in the equipment information database related to shipment of the piece of equipment from the central inventory location to the service center." Applicant submits that, as discussed above, the Harris et al. disclosure that a submitter or recipient may initiate the physical transfer of the item to the recipient using some or all of the data (see Harris et al., col. 13, lines 33-35) does not teach, disclose or even suggest the novel additional step of storing shipment attributes in the equipment information database related to shipment of the piece of equipment from the central inventory location to the service center.

Applicant respectfully submits that amended Claim 13 overcomes Examiner's rejection based on §102 since Harris et al. discloses initiating the physical transfer of equipment, which fails to disclose the step of storing shipment attributes in the equipment information database related to shipment of the piece of equipment from the central inventory location to the service center, as provided in amended Claim 13. Applicant's Claims 14-15 and 17-21 depend from Claim 13 and provide additional features, which combined with Claim 13 are not shown in the Harris et al. or other cited references. For this reason,

Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of Claims 13-15 and 17-21 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) and pass Claims 13-15 and 17-21 to issue.

Applicant has amended Claim 22 to clarify that the step of allocating the order includes the features of allocating the order when the equipment is available, but when the equipment is unavailable further generating a purchase order information to purchase the equipment from an equipment vendor. The step further includes electronically communicating the purchase order information to an accounting system. And in response to receiving the equipment, further electronically communicating with the accounting system indicating receipt of the ordered equipment and authorizing payment to the equipment vendor.

The Harris et al. reference fails to teach, disclose or even suggest this novel step of allocating the orders including generating purchase order information when equipment is unavailable. Since the amendments to Claim 22 provide additional features not disclosed in the Harris et al. or the other cited references, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of Claim 22 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) and pass Claim 22 to issue.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103

In the Office Action mailed May 14, 2002, the Examiner rejected Applicant's claims 14 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Harris et al, in view of Ruffolo et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,041,288). In support of Examiner's rejection, Examiner stated:

Harris et al show all the features of the applicant's claimed invention except the equipment being a transformer. Ruffolo et al disclose an inventory tracking system for transformers, see col. 1, line 22. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art in view of the showing and teaching of Ruffolo et al to include transformers in the equipment that is tracked in the system of Harris et al.

Claim 17 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Harris et al in view of Ruffolo et al. Harris et al show all the features of the applicant's claimed invention except the bar code scanner. Ruffolo et al disclose an inventory tracking system including a bar code scanner to enter data, see col. 4, lines 20-31. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art in view of the showing and teaching of Ruffolo et al to provide the system of Harris et al with a bar code scanner to enter data into the database.

Claims 14 and 17 depend from amended independent Claim 13, which, as previously mentioned above, provides additional features not disclosed in either the Harris et al. or Ruffolo et al. references. Applicant understands that dependent claims include each and every element of the dependent claim as well as that the claims from which they depend. Specifically, Applicant's amended claim 13 includes the additional step of storing shipment attributes in the equipment information database related to shipment of the piece of equipment from the central inventory location to the service center, a novel step which is not disclosed by the references cited by the Examiner.

Applicant submits that Claims 14 and 17 would not have been obvious since neither Harris et al. nor Ruffolo et al., either alone or in combination, teach disclose or even suggest the combination claimed in Applicant's Claims 14 and 17. For this reason, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) and pass Claims 14 and 17 to issue.

CLAIM OBJECTIONS

In the Office Action mailed May 14, 2002, the Examiner objected to Claim 16 as being a substantial duplicate of Claim 15. Applicant has cancelled Claim 16, obviating this objection.

SPECIFICATION

In the Office Action mailed May 14, 2002, the Examiner noted that Figures 32 and 36 were described twice in the Brief Description of the Drawings. In response to Examiner's comments, certain amendments to the specification have been made. Applicant appreciates Examiner's comments.

Examiner also noted that Exhibit A was not described in the specification. Applicant draws Examiner's attention to page 25, lines 19-22 of the application, which describes Exhibit A. In the event Examiner suggests further modification, Applicant would willingly provide additional description of Exhibit A.

OTHER REFERENCES

The references cited by the Examiner but not relied on have been reviewed. However, Applicant believes that none of the references, either singularly or in combination, disclose, teach, or even suggest Applicant's invention as disclosed and

claimed in the present application. Thus, no further comments concerning such references are deemed necessary.

SUMMARY

It is respectfully submitted that the application, as now pending, is in condition for allowance for the reasons stated above. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner allow claims 1-15 and 17-34 and pass such claims to issue. Should the Examiner have any questions regarding this amendment, or the remarks contained herein, Applicant's attorney would welcome the opportunity to discuss this matter with the Examiner. Applicant's attorney can be reached at 214.979.3093.

To the extent that any further fees are required during the pendency of this Application, including petition fees, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge payment of any additional fees, including, without limitation, any fees under 37 C.F.R. §1.16 or 37 C.F.R. §1.17, to Deposit Account No. 23-3189 of Hunton & Williams (Dallas) and reference Attorney Docket No. BASI.IP2013. In the event that any additional time is needed for this filing, or any additional time in excess of that requested in a petition for an extension of time, please consider this a petition for an extension of time for any needed extension of time pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.136 or any other section or provision of Title 37. Applicant respectfully requests that the Commissioner grant any such petition and authorizes the Commissioner to charge the Deposit Account referenced above. Please credit any overpayments to this same Deposit Account.

ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. BASI.IP2013
CUSTOMER NO. 24347

AMENDMENT AND RESPONSE
SERIAL NO. 09/580,536

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This amendment is intended to be a complete response to the
Office Action mailed May 14, 2002.

Respectfully submitted,



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APPENDIX A

Marked-up of paragraph on page 9, lines 13-16

FIGURES 28 through [32] 31 provide an exemplary set of Graphical User Interfaces (GUIs) that may be used **to** provide inventory module functionality that may only be accessed by certain users, such as at a central inventory location;

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FIGURES 32 through [36] 35 provide an exemplary set of Graphical User Interfaces (GUIs) that may be used **to** provide transportation module functionality; and

APPENDIX B

13. (Amended) A method for managing equipment information comprising:

storing attributes of a piece of equipment in an equipment information database that indicates the type of the equipment when the equipment is received at a central inventory location;

adding an indication in the equipment information database that the equipment is available inventory;

receiving an order for equipment needed at a service center that is of the same type as the equipment;

allocating inventory to the order based on available inventory in the equipment information database;

shipping the equipment for the order to the service center;

storing shipment attributes in the equipment information database related to shipment of the piece of equipment from the central inventory location to the service center;

installing the equipment;

updating the equipment information database to indicate that the equipment has been installed;

removing the equipment;

updating the equipment information database that the equipment has been removed; and

shipping the equipment to the central inventory location.

22. (Amended) A method for allocating an order in an equipment information system comprising:

receiving an order to supply equipment from an equipment inventory at a central inventory location to a service center;

determining if the order is eligible for allocation;
determining if equipment is available in the equipment inventory to [fill] allocate the order;

allocating the order when the equipment is available and when the equipment is unavailable further generating a purchase order information to purchase the equipment from an equipment vendor and electronically communicating the purchase order information to an accounting system, and in response to receiving the equipment further electronically communicating with the accounting system indicating receipt of the ordered equipment and authorizing payment to the equipment vendor; and
filling the order.

23. (New) The equipment information system of Claim 1, further comprising a compliance module to record a compliance information related to the equipment.

24. (New) The equipment information system of Claim of 23, wherein the compliance information is further defined as a rate base information related to a location of the equipment and a date the equipment went into service.

25. (New) The equipment information system of Claim of 24, wherein the rate base information relates to a utility rate for utility services provided by regulated utilities.

26. (New) The equipment information system of Claim of 24, wherein the compliance module is operable to communicate with an accounting system to communicate the rate base information between the accounting system and the equipment information system for determining a utility rate base.

27. (New) The equipment information system of Claim of 1, wherein the compliance information is further defined as a testing information related to the equipment.

28. (New) The equipment information system of Claim of 27, wherein the testing information is further defined as environmental testing information related to the equipment.

29. (New) The equipment information system of Claim of 27, wherein the equipment includes transformers and wherein the testing information is further defined as environmental tests of transformers.

30. (New) The equipment information system of Claim 1, further comprising a work module operable to plan a construction related to an electrical distribution system and further operable to identify the equipment needed for the construction, the work module coupled to the inquiry module to query the

equipment database for the equipment for the construction and further coupled to the inventory module to allocate equipment for the construction.

31. (New) The equipment information system of Claim 1, further comprising a graphical information module to graphically illustrate an electrical distribution system.

32. (New) The equipment information system of Claim 31, wherein the equipment includes transformers and wherein the electrical distribution system illustrated by the graphical information module is further defined as a portion of an electric grid of an electric utility.

33. (New) The equipment information system of Claim 31, wherein the graphical information module graphically represents an electrical characteristic and a physical characteristic of the electrical distribution system.

34. (New) The equipment information system of Claim 31, wherein the graphical information module is further operable to track and monitor an electrical loading and a performance of the electrical distribution system.